

## FOOD \$ENSE -- SNAC SEATTLE NUTRITION ACTION CONSORTIUM

**SNAC** is a multi-agency collaborative effort working since 1994 to promote nutrition messages and teach practical nutrition education. Community organizations, government programs, businesses, and an enthusiastic staff are responsible for the program's success.



SNAC's mission is to improve the health and nutritional well being of limited income families with children in the Greater Seattle area. SNAC promotes the good taste of healthy food and encourages families to eat meals together.

### Goals:

SNAC partners work cooperatively to deliver nutrition education and messages that:

- Increase nutrition knowledge,
- Improve food preparation skills, and
- Teach families to prepare quick economical, tasty and nutritious meals.

**Our message is simple. Healthy meals are easy to make and taste great!**

### 2005 Accomplishments:

- During 2005 SNAC expanded programming to nearly ninety nutrition education classes, from 50 to 75, events and demonstrations per month in a variety of community settings.
- SNAC's nutrition education outreach assistants delivered nutrition education to approximately 7,500 youth and 5,500 adults, resulting in 13,000 contacts each year.
- Program evaluation results show an improvement in nutrition knowledge and participants' intention to eat more fruits and vegetables in the future. 29% of students enrolled in You're the Cook!, a middle school program, improved nutrition knowledge. 67% of those students evaluated prepared a new, healthy recipe at home. 32% of students participating in Mission: Delicious, a K-3 school program, improved their nutrition knowledge.



Students at Mission: Delicious at Olympic Hills Elementary prepare their own healthy snack.

*Photo: J. Harsila*

### ***Mission: Delicious***

Mission: Delicious is a popular event that was taught at fourteen Seattle Public Schools (SPS) in 2005. At each school we delivered the program to 120 kindergarten-third graders. Students attended the event that took place in the cafeteria; they rotated through two stations. Each station included a fifteen-minute nutrition lesson and students prepared and enjoyed their own healthy snacks. Teachers gave complementary lessons before and after the event and educational materials were sent home to families.

# From Kindergarten to High School

## Teaching Nutrition through Cooking

SNAC's target audience is low income families who are eligible for food stamps. Classes, demonstrations and community events include a nutrition lesson or message. One of our key messages is to include more fruits and vegetables in an individual's diet everyday. SNAC also teaches topics such food safety and the importance of hand washing. Events are lively and interactive, often including hands-on cooking demonstrations that stress healthy and inexpensive meal choices. Participants learn healthy cooking techniques and taste freshly prepared food. They receive written materials, such as recipes, to take home with them.

### Comments from middle school parents and students about You're the Cook! classes:

"The recipes have been a big hit with our family. We've enjoyed several dinners he made. I'm hearing a lot about things he's learning in class. Thank you!"

"I was surprised the meal was so tasty. The experience pulled the family closer together. The younger children even wanted to help Michael prepare the meal."

"Yes, You're the Cook! was a positive experience for Kayla, because she has realized cooking takes time and planning. She's also enjoyed the vegetables more than she thought she would."

### Student comment:

"I learned that healthy foods can actually taste good."

## You're the Cook!

You're the Cook! is a three-class series that was taught to 700 students in four middle schools in the SPS district during 2005.

Students learned about nutrition, food and kitchen safety. They helped prepare a recipe during each class. Each week students were given a homework packet and were given extra credit, if they prepared a recipe at home.



Your the Cook at Denny Middle School

Photo: J. Harsila

## Nutrition Gardening

SNAC's garden-enhanced nutrition education program, Cultivating Youth, provides an opportunity for youth to enjoy growing and eating produce they have grown them-

selves, while learning about nutrition. Cultivating Youth reaches 350 students, resulting in 6,500 contacts during in-school and after school programs throughout the school year.



Student at High Point Elementary enjoys eating from the garden.

Photo: J. Harsila

## High Schools

SNAC presents lively cooking demonstrations outside three SPS high school cafeterias at lunchtime. About 300 students sample healthy recipes and receive nutrition messages and recipes each school year.

### Washington State University Extension/Food Sense SNAC's Community Partners:

City of Seattle — Human Services Department, Dept. of Neighborhoods and Parks & Recreation, City of SeaTac Parks & Recreation, Fremont Public Association, Puget Sound Educational Service District, Seattle Public Schools, and Share Our Strength/Operation Frontline.

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